

is very interesting, and I wish I had my chart down here as it relates to profits that Big Oil has made on the Republican watch.

When President Bush became President, Dick Cheney had a special meeting in 2001 with oil companies, and all of a sudden, these oil companies started making these profits that were really unconscionable, unprecedented, never happened before in the history of the Republic. But then again we have Republicans on the floor saying, what is up with these oil prices?

Well, you know, it's very interesting. I want to point the Members, too, because it's nothing about fact versus fiction. Republican leadership wrote the Speaker a letter saying, well, what are you doing about the fuel issue and the price of gas in the United States of America? And me knowing the Speaker and all of us knowing the Speaker, that she sleeps with her fists balled up, especially fighting on behalf of the American people.

And I think it's very, very important, and we realize that this is very serious business, when folks have to pay \$4 out of their pocket to pay for a gallon of gas, I think it's something that we should be paying close attention to.

The Speaker wrote the Republican leadership back in this House and said, It's interesting. We have H.R. 2264 that we put forth on the floor in asking the Department of Justice to take legal action against OPEC-controlled entities for participating in oil cartels that are driving up the price of oil. That's H.R. 2264. How about the Energy Price Gouging Act, which is H.R. 1252, legislation that will reduce the burden of rising gas prices on American families, providing immediate relief to consumers by giving the Federal Trade Commission authority to investigate and punish those that are artificially inflating fuel prices? How about H.R. 5351 with ExxonMobil ranked as the most profitable company in 2007? It's unnecessary for taxpayers to subsidize Big Oil. It goes on and on.

I will pull one more bill out. How about the marketing manipulation provision that was in the Energy Independence Security Act of 2007? It talks about some of the very things that I mentioned.

But this is not the kicker, Mr. Speaker and Members. It's interesting that the Republican leadership would write the Speaker trying to do a Potomac two-step when we're here about the business.

See, the reason why we're in the majority is because Republicans, Independents, Democrats, people that voted for the first time wanted to vote for change, so they voted for the Democrats to take control of this House of Representatives; Republicans who are frustrated, Republican voters who are frustrated with the fact that Republicans were saying one thing and doing another in the back halls of Congress. We have opened this process up when we took the majority here, and that's

what they were looking for, and we will continue.

But the irony of the whole issue is that the Republicans will write a letter to the Speaker as though "we got you on black-and-white paper," and she's not paying enough attention to say, Wait a minute. Let me call you out since you wanted to call me out.

As a matter of fact, the top of the Republican leadership here voted against the issue as it relates to OPEC price gouging, voted against the Price Gouging Act that we passed, the House bill that I called out just a few minutes ago; voted against renewable energy so that we can drive the cost down and compete with petroleum and OPEC companies and other folks that want to raise the price of gas in the United States, and voted against the Energy Security Act.

So I think it's very important for us to look at the hypocrisy of the democracy on the other side of the Republican aisle. Now I won't generalize all of the Republicans in this House because some of them voted with the Democrats on it because they see the light.

Many of their colleagues that were lockstep with the philosophy of the letter that the Republican leadership wrote to the Speaker are now watching me at home on C-SPAN because they made a career decision not to follow the will of the American people and bring about the kind of change that they woke up early one Tuesday morning looking for. This great democracy of ours calls for representation. Not representation of special interests.

And so I'm very pleased with my Democratic colleagues that have voted for our Democratic leadership to be in the leadership to lead us in this new direction that we share with the American people. We didn't just share it with Democrats; we shared it with Republicans, we shared it with the Independents, and we shared it with the American people. We shared it with those that are yet unborn, those that cannot vote right now to give them hope in this government that we're here fighting on behalf of them.

There are veterans right now that are in the sound of my voice, that can hear my voice right now, that have fought for this country and allowed us to salute one flag. And I think it's very, very important, Mr. Speaker, very, very important, Members, very, very important, those congressional staffers, that we do the things that we have to do to make this country better.

These kind of letters, writing back and forth for the sake that I wrote a letter, motions to recommit to say that we're going to call the Democrats out on not doing anything about gas prices; we don't have oil on our hands. They need to go down to 1600 Pennsylvania and check that out. They had the first meeting. They sat down with oil executives. They're the individuals that have the oil background.

And we have a better reason of why we need to change what is going on

right now through using alternative fuel versus telling American people that they're addicted to oil.

So we've got a lot of work to do, and I'm hoping that this bipartisan vote that we took on Mr. MURPHY's bill today is something that's blowing through the air ducts here in Washington, D.C. that Republicans and Democrats can vote together when it makes sense. It makes sense for us to look for alternative fuels.

It makes sense for us to be greener. It makes sense for us to do what we're doing here, Mr. MURPHY and Mr. Speaker, of greening the Capitol. Greening the Capitol, we just started that when the Democrats took control. Mr. MURPHY talked about the fact that this made sense, but it never would have seen the light of day, Mr. Speaker, if it wasn't for Democratic leadership here in this House allowing Mr. MURPHY's bill to make it to the floor so Members can vote in a unanimous way.

Some of my friends on the other side of the aisle, Republicans, they're people, too. And it's very important that we give them the opportunity to vote on good pieces of legislation. And I think it's important that we don't allow anyone to stand in the school house door or the policy door of this Congress and not allow legislation to come to the floor.

Case in point, Mr. MURPHY, if I may. All of the 9/11 recommendations were held back by the Republicans when they were in control. We passed them here in the House of Representatives. To be able to cut student loan interest rates in half on behalf of all of the American people; those that drive Ford, Chevy trucks that are paying somewhere in the neighborhood of \$95 to fill their tank up, to those individuals that are catching the bus that have been green all their lives because they have no alternatives; those individuals that wake up early in the morning that snap, pop these sheets over here in Washington, D.C. and throughout America in these hotels that know what it means to punch in and punch out every day with a 15-minute break in the morning, if they get it, and a 30-minute lunch break, if they get it, those kind of individuals. Those kind of individuals that come home and take off steel-toed boots and sit down and try to recover from the day that they had of working a solid 8 or 12 hours. Those individuals.

Those are the kind of people that we talk to here in this Democratic Congress. Those are the kind of individuals that we allow Republicans to vote on good legislation like Mr. MURPHY brought to the floor today because he just got here and he wants to show his constituents and the American people since they federalized him to come to this floor to represent them, that they will have the opportunity to vote for good legislation. Not only for him to go home but for him to sleep right at night.

So I think it's important, Mr. Speaker. I have no problem with Members